

(Continued from front cover)

below normal in the **northern Mid-Atlantic region**. In the **Corn Belt**, scattered, locally heavy showers maintained generally adequate soil moisture supplies for filling corn and soybeans. Farther south, isolated showers provided only limited relief from long-term drought in the **Southeast**, while exceptionally dry conditions persisted in the **South-Central States**. In the **western half of the country**, significant rainfall was confined to the **central High Plains** and parts of the **Southwest**. Dozens of wildfires remained active across the **West**, primarily from the **Great Basin** to the **northern Rockies**.

In **Arkansas**, **El Dorado** noted four daily-record highs during the week, including highs of 106°F on August 22 and 26, en route to an average maximum temperature of 103.9°F.

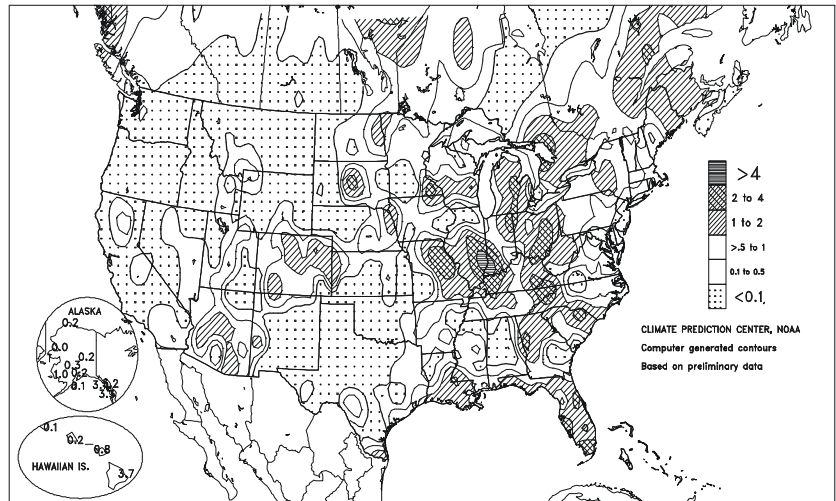
Wichita, KS posted three consecutive record highs (104, 105, and 108°F) from August 24-26. During the first 26 days of the month, **Wichita** registered 18 days with highs at or above 100°F (the average is 4 days), second only to their August 1936 record of 22 days. **Wichita's** month-to-date average temperature, 86.0°F, also stood second behind the August 1936 standard of 89.0°F.

In **Dallas-Ft. Worth, TX**, where temperatures reached or exceeded 100°F on 12 days in July and 22 of the first 26 days in August, Saturday marked the 57th consecutive day (July 1 - August 26) without measurable rainfall. Their longest dry spells on record, 58 days, were observed in November-December 1950 and May-July 1934. After 5.68 inches of rain soaked **Dallas-Ft. Worth** during the first 17 days of June, only 0.25 inch was measured from June 18-30 and just a trace has fallen since. Elsewhere in **Texas**, August 1-26 rainfall totaled 0.01 inch in **Lubbock**, representing their driest August since a trace fell in 1943. Farther north, **Grand Junction, CO** noted 4 more days with highs at or above 90°F, raising their year-to-date total to 83 days. **Grand Junction's** annual record is 90 days in 1977. Similarly, the number of 90-degree days climbed to 53 days in **North Platte, NE** (the record is 67 days in 1934 and 1936) and 55 days in **Denver, CO** (the record is 60 days in 1994). Despite the continuing heat in **Denver**, the central High Plains received much-needed rainfall. **Denver** netted 1.45 inches on August 17, capping a 3-day period during which 1.77 inches fell.

Wildfires remained active in the **West**, especially from the **Great Basin** to the **northern Rockies**. According to the National Interagency Fire Center, year-to-date wildfires consumed about 6.2 million acres in the United States through August 28, about 230 percent of the 10-year average. Fires in **Nevada**, **Idaho**, and **Montana** accounted for more than 2.5 million burned acres, more than 40 percent of the national total. Despite the ongoing dry spell and threat of fires, cooler air arrived in the **Northwest**. In **western Montana**, **Kalispell** tallied three consecutive daily-record lows (32, 33, and 33°F) from August 20-22. In **Oregon**,

Total Precipitation (Inches)

AUG 20 - 26, 2000



record lows on August 21 included 34°F in **Burns** and 43°F in **Pendleton**. Cool weather also overspread areas from the **Great Lakes States** into the **Northeast**, resulting in more than a dozen daily-record lows. On Monday, temperatures fell to 37°F in **Alpena, MI** and 43°F in **Scranton, PA**.

Locally heavy showers continued to pepper the **Corn Belt**, producing a daily-record total (2.15 inches on August 25) in **Rochester, MN**. More than 4 inches of rain soaked portions of **southwestern Indiana** and adjacent areas in **Illinois**. Meanwhile in the **Southwest**, scattered downpours struck for the third consecutive week, boosting soil moisture reserves. Most of the heaviest rainfall was again confined to portions of **Arizona** and **Colorado**, although showers reached areas as far west as **southern California**.

In the tropics, former Hurricane Alberto lost its tropical characteristics on August 23 after a run of 19 days as a named storm that never threatened land. In **Atlantic Basin** history, only two other tropical systems survived longer: Carrie, in September 1957, and Ginger, in September-October 1971. Meanwhile, Hurricane Debby passed just north of **Puerto Rico**, producing heavy rainfall in the central highlands. **Puerto Rican** 24-hour rainfall totals on August 22-23 topped 10 inches in a few locations, including 12.64 inches at **Rio Piedrad** and 10.29 inches at **Rio la Plata**. The storm produced a 2-day total of 5.33 inches in **San Juan, PR**, lifting their August 1-26 total to 9.09 inches (206 percent of normal). Nevertheless, **San Juan's** year-to-date rainfall remained well below normal (23.08 inches, or 77 percent of normal).

An unusually cool weather pattern deepened across **Alaska**, holding weekly temperatures as much as 8°F below normal. On Friday, **Cold Bay** noted a daily-record low of 37°F. Precipitation diminished across **mainland Alaska**, but occasional heavy rainfall continued in southeastern parts of the State. Meanwhile in **Hawaii**, beneficial showers lingered during the week, following the August 19-20 passage of Hurricane Hector's remnants.